

Parent Communication and Involvement Policy

Source of Obligation

The NSW Registration Manual (3.6.2) requires the School to have in place and implement policies and procedures in relation to communication, with specific reference to formal and informal mechanisms available between stakeholders interested in a student's education and wellbeing.

Our Policy

At Moama Anglican Grammar we believe that positive, clear and effective communication between the School and community members is central to providing a mutually supportive environment that will enable our students to meet their full potential.

Key to meeting these needs is trust and an open and effective communication between all members of the school community. Schools are very busy places and there is a great deal of information that needs to be conveyed to students, parents, guardians and staff. The aim of these guidelines is to provide protocols that will be applied to achieve communication objectives that enhance awareness, understanding, involvement and learning. We aim for all communication to be directed to the successful development of our students and our school community.

This policy outlines the main ways in which Moama Anglican Grammar seeks to facilitate both formal and informal communication between the School and parents/guardians, including:

- Structured parent/teacher communications
- General School communications
- Parent-initiated communications with teachers
- Academic and Pastoral communication
- Communication between teachers and Year 7 to Year 11 students
- Communication between teachers and HSC students
- Phone calls
- Emails
- Notification of events and excursions
- Complaints management.

The mode of communication is appropriate:

- That effective, informative and relevant communication occurs between all school community members.
- That communication is properly targeted and timely.
- That communication is considered holistically and consideration is given to multi-modal strategies.
- Confidential information is to be managed in a manner consistent with professional standards and legal obligations.
- Processes are provided that are clear, positive and fair which allow issues or concerns to be aired and resolved in a timely, effective and respectful manner.

Structured Parent/Teacher Communications

Structured parent/teacher communications are facilitated throughout the year via:

- Entries in student diaries
- Parent/teacher interviews (electronic booking system through PC Spider)
- Parent and guardian information evenings

General School Communication to Parents/Guardians

General School communications to parents/guardians are facilitated through:

- The online publication of our fortnightly newsletter
- Updated on our public website
- Updated on SEQTA Engage
- School calendar
- Notes and other written communications provided to students to be passed on to parents/guardians
- Emails highlighting important information pertaining to the whole School, a year group or a subject / class group
- Letters by post – used where email is not possible or is deemed inappropriate.

Parent initiated communications with Teachers

Parents and guardians should have regard to the fact that our teachers are professionals and have multiple responsibilities outside of their direct teaching commitments. It may therefore be difficult to arrange meetings at short notice during a school day.

As a matter of general guidance:

- Enquiries relating to specific performance or educational issues should be addressed to a student's teacher.
- General curriculum enquiries should be addressed to the Head of Teaching and Learning or the Year Level Coordinator (Secondary) or the Head of Primary School.
- Pastoral care enquiries should be addressed to a student's Year Level Coordinator (YLC) or relevant Head of School.
- All communication is respectful, equitable and aimed at promoting understanding.
- Proper consideration is given to the individual needs and characteristics of recipients.
- Communication does not and is not used to discriminate, bully, harass or offend in any way.
- All communication is courteous and appropriate for a place of work.
- That communication otherwise complies with professional standards and legal obligations.

When seeking to arrange a meeting parents should make a formal appointment for either a telephone conversation or a face-to-face meeting.

Appointments can be made by telephoning the School Office on 03 5480 5900.

Where possible we will endeavour to arrange a meeting within three days of receiving a request. If a parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the response of a teacher they should request an appointment with their child's Year Level Coordinator (YLC) or relevant Head of School.

Academic and Pastoral Communication

With the introduction of SEQTA, parents and guardians have an opportunity to be more aware of and involved in their child's academic progress continuously throughout the school year.

SEQTA is a collaborative teaching and learning system. SEQTA Engage keeps parents involved in all aspects of their child's education. Parents can access their child's student information – including class timetables, attendance records, school notices, homework and assessments.

There will be updates on how SEQTA can be used effectively by parents and guardians as SEQTA improve their program and as we, as a school, implement the program. These updates will be communicated via the school Newsletter and/or emails to families and/or at SEQTA Parent/Guardian Information Evenings.

For academic enquiries parents/guardians should contact the relevant teacher in the first instance. The relevant Head of Faculty may become involved in the communication on request of parent/guardian and/or teacher. The relevant Head of Teaching and Learning (Primary or Secondary) may also be involved in the communication on request of parent/guardian and/or Head of Faculty.

For pastoral enquiries (including confidential information that needs to be shared with the school) parents/guardians should contact the relevant Year Level Coordinator in the first instance. The relevant Head of School (Primary or Secondary) may become involved in the communication on request of parent/guardian and/or Year Level Coordinator.

For more serious or more confidential communication parents/guardians can contact the Deputy Principal. The Principal may become involved in the communication on request of parent/guardian and/or Deputy Principal.

Communication between teachers and Year 7 to 11 students

By the time students get to Secondary School we encourage them to be more involved in their own learning. To this end students will often contact teachers directly out of class time via email. Teachers are not expected to read or respond to student emails sent in the evenings until within 48 hours of the start of the next school day. Teachers will negotiate with students when they will be able to respond to emails outside of class time.

Teachers will communicate to their classes when they are available to help with set learning tasks outside of class time. If a task is due in on a certain time and day, teachers are not expected to answer questions about that task in the immediate 48 hours prior to the due date of the task being handed in.

Communication between teachers and HSC students

The nature of the relationship between Year 12 (HSC) students and their teachers means that students and teachers spend more time together working on learning tasks and preparing for HSC assessments and examinations.

HSC students may at times also need extra assistance from their teachers to complete work. This can include times after school and/or during non-school time term breaks.

Email is an appropriate medium for students to seek this assistance from their teacher. Teachers will negotiate with their HSC students about when they may be available to be contacted via email. Teachers are not expected to respond to student emails requesting correction or checking of drafts within 48 hours of the due date of the task. Otherwise, teachers will endeavour to respond to emails from HSC students within 48 hours if possible. If more time is required, then a teacher will send an email stating when the email will be returned with an appropriate answer.

HSC teachers may negotiate with Year 12 students, at different times of the year, to make themselves available to receive emails in the evenings or on weekends to correct drafts or to answer questions about specific learning tasks. Email contact at these times is at the teacher's discretion and not an expectation by the School of HSC teachers.

Phone Calls

Staff will endeavour to respond to phone calls from parents/guardians within 48 hours if possible.

Emails

Staff will endeavour to respond to emails from parents/guardians within 48 hours if possible.

If more time is required then staff will endeavour to send an email stating when the email will be returned with the appropriate answer.

Notification of Events and Excursions

The Moama Anglican Grammar school newsletter often has information about events and protocols that need to be noted by families. It is important that all families read the newsletter each fortnight to familiarise themselves with any events or notices that may only be reported on in the school's newsletter.

SEQTA Engage includes a Calendar of events and includes a daily notices SIP (Student Information Pane). For excursions teachers fill out the required excursion eForm when organising these type of events.

Events involving students attending activities outside their normal class routine or off site are entered on the school calendar as soon as approved. For all school events, parents should receive a permission note approximately 2 weeks before the event where possible.

All eForms about events include the following information:

- Time
- Date
- Venue
- What to wear
- What to bring
- Pick up/drop off details
- Educational reasons for the event
- Staff supervision arrangements

Return of eForm permissions

All permission eForms should be filled in by 48 hours before the event.

An administration staff member will contact parents about the non-returned permission eForms. Only one reminder will be issued.

Courteous and Respectful Behaviour

The School's staff endeavour to be courteous and respectful with our students, parents/guardians and the wider community. We also expect students, parents/guardians and others to be courteous and respectful with our staff, especially to set an example for their children.

Parents/guardians are expected to abide by the School's **Code of Conduct (Parents / Guardians)** at all times, and all communications with teachers and School staff should be approached in a

calm and non-aggressive manner.

Complaints Policy

If a parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the conduct or outcome of their communications with a teacher, Year Level Coordinator or other member of Moama Anglican Grammar's staff they may lodge a formal complaint which will be dealt with in accordance with our **Complaints Handling Program**.

Emergencies

Normally, a parent or guardian should not communicate with their child during school hours. In the event of an emergency, parents/guardians are requested to contact the School office and advise them of the nature of the emergency. Staff members will then facilitate communication between the parent/guardian and child.

Teachers' Responsibilities

To support teachers in attaining and maintaining Proficient Teacher accreditation, the School encourages teachers to take responsibility for:

- planning for appropriate and contextually relevant opportunities for parents / guardians to be involved in their children's learning.
- establishing and maintaining respectful collaborative relationships with parents / guardians regarding their children's learning and wellbeing.

To support experienced teachers in attaining and maintaining Highly Accomplished Teacher accreditation, the School encourages experienced teachers to take responsibility for:

- working with their colleagues to provide appropriate and contextually relevant opportunities for parents / guardians to be involved in their children's learning
- demonstrating responsiveness in all communications with parents / guardians about their children's learning and wellbeing.

To support highly experienced teachers in attaining and maintaining Lead Teacher accreditation, the School encourages highly experienced teachers to take responsibility for:

- initiating contextually relevant processes to establish programs that involve parents / guardians in the education of their children and broader School priorities and activities
- identifying, initiating and building on opportunities that engage parents / carers in both the progress of their children's learning and in the educational priorities of the School.

Implementation

Moama Anglican Grammar has set up a series of compliance tasks in CompliSpace Assurance, to ensure that key obligations under the NSW Registration Manual are managed effectively.

**Principal
Moama Anglican Grammar**